Impact of disinvestment of BALCO and Modern Food Industries on labour

†3631. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Fact Finding Committee had visited the BALCO and Modern Food Industries this year to assess the impact of disinvestment on labour;

(b) the names of the Members of the Committee; and

(c) the recommendations and proposals made by the Committee in its report?

THE MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) and (b) A team set up by the Ministry of Labour comprising President, Bhartiya Mazdoor Sangh; Secretary General, Employees Federation of India, Joint Secretary, Ministry of labour and Joint Secretary, Ministry of Disinvestment has visited BALCO's Head Office at Korba on 13-14 February, 2003. The visit of the team to Modern Food Industries (India) Ltd. (MFIL) is scheduled for April-May, 2003.

(c) Does not arise in view of the reply to parts (a) and (b).

Crisis faced by Indian fishermen in mid sea

3632. DR. M.N. DAS: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether with authorities on both sides of Palk straits working swiftly to defuse crisis faced by the Tamil Nadu fishermen in mid sea, Indian and Sri Lankan governments and Navies have started to work out a lasting solution;

(b) if so, whether forty two more Indians have been taken captive by the Sri Lanka Government;

(c) whether Pakistan has also detained another thirty two fishermen in the Arabian Sea, signalling complexity of the problem;

(d) if so, whether India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are making any efforts to find a lasting solution to fishermen's woes;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(e) whether any agreement has been reached; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) Government maintains regular contact with Sri Lanka through diplomatic channels for securing the early release and repatriation of Indian fishermen in Sri Lankan custody.

(b) No. As on April 9, 2003 thirty Indian fishermen are in custody with Sri Lanka authorities.

(c) Pakistan apprehended thirty-two Indian fishermen on March 6, 2003.

(d) **For Sri Lanka:** Both side agree that these cases should be dealt with in a spirit of compassion and understanding, in accordance with established legal procedures and in a humane manner. Government has suggested to the Sri Lankan Government that licensed fishing in their northeastern waters be permitted.

For Pakistan: Government announced on July 4, 2001 that Indian Coast Guard would not apprehend Pakistani fishermen who inadvertently transgress into our water and they would be turned back after due warning. Pakistan failed to reciprocate the gesture.

(e) and (f) Nil.

Passport racket in Delhi

3633. SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have unearthed a Passport racket in Delhi recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of persons arrested in this connection and the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) Yes.

(b) and (c) Delhi Police is investigating a case regarding fraudulent issuance of Indian Passports to nine Afghan nationals. Two passport